

IRS News Release

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IRS Completes Taxpayer Assistance Blueprint

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WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today announced it has submitted to Congress the completed Taxpayer Assistance Blueprint. The Blueprint is the joint response of the IRS, the IRS Oversight Board and the National Taxpayer Advocate to a congressional mandate for the development of a five-year plan for the delivery of taxpayer service.

The Blueprint represents the most extensive IRS research ever conducted into the needs, preferences and behaviors of taxpayers and partners who assist them in complying with the tax laws, such as volunteer and paid tax return preparers. This research formed the foundation for the strategic plan for taxpayer service outlined in the Blueprint. The plan includes a variety of specific recommendations for improving IRS services for taxpayers and partners. Improving taxpayer service is an important part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce the “tax gap” — the difference between the amount of tax that taxpayers pay and the amount that they owe — by helping taxpayers understand and meet their tax obligations.

“As this filing season draws to a close, we are committed to providing good service to taxpayers and enforcing the law,” IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson said. “This document is an important step to help us continue to improve our taxpayer services.”

To address congressional and stakeholder interests, the Blueprint was designed to:

- Establish a taxpayer and partner baseline of needs, preferences and behaviors;
- Create a transparent process for making service-related resource and operational decisions;
- Develop a framework to improve service delivery; and
- Define both short-term performance and long-term business goals and metrics to assess service value.

“The Blueprint outlines the way forward,” said Richard Morgante, Commissioner of the IRS Wage and Investment Division. “It responds to the needs of taxpayers and partners and supports the government’s compliance objectives, all within the context of our budget.”

"It is critical that the IRS understand what services taxpayers need and their preferences for receiving them," IRS Oversight Board Chairman Paul B. Jones said. "The Taxpayer Assistance Blueprint is based on extensive research and provides a strategic five-year plan to help the IRS make the most out of its investments in taxpayer services."

"I am pleased that the IRS recognizes the need for a taxpayer-centric approach to taxpayer service — one that is based on sound research and observation," National Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson said. "The TAB is a much-needed first step to delivering this service in ways that meet taxpayer needs."

The Blueprint offers recommendations to expand, simplify, standardize and automate services, and to improve and expand technology infrastructure. It includes recommendations for increasing education and outreach to taxpayers, partners and IRS employees, and incorporating feedback from these stakeholders into future service decisions.

Link:

- Taxpayer Assistance Blueprint:
<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=156394,00.html>